The Ladder

June, 1958

50¢

purpose of the

Daughters of BILITIS

A WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROMOTING THE INTEGRATION OF THE HOMOSEXUAL INTO SOCIETY BY:

1. Education of the variant, with particular emphasis on the psychological, physiological and sociological aspects, to enable her to understand herself and make her adjustment to society in all its social, civic and economic implications—this to be accomplished by establishing and maintaining as complete a library as possible of both fiction and non-fiction literature on the sex deviant theme; by sponsoring public discussions on pertinent subjects to be conducted by leading members of the legal, psychiatric, religious and other professions; by advocating a mode of behavior and dress acceptable to society.

2. Education of the public at large through acceptance first of the individual, leading to an eventual breakdown of erroneous taboos and prejudices; through public discussion meetings afforded thereto; through dissemination of educational literature on the homosexual theme.

3. Participation in research projects by duly authorized and responsible psychologists, sociologists and other such experts directed towards further knowledge of the homosexual.

4. Investigation of the penal code as it pertains to the homosexual, proposal of changes to provide an equitable handling of cases involving this minority group, and promotion of these changes through due process of law in the state legislatures.

the Ladder

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THE LADDER is regarded as a sounding board for various points of view on the homophile and related subjects and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the organization.

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Cover by Helen Sanders

From Over the Sea

In the March issue we published a letter in the "Readers Respond" column from a young woman in Germany. She was at that time planning on publishing a magazine similar to THE LADDER, since she felt that the homophile magazines now issuing from Europe do not give adequate coverage to the women.

"Kontakt" has not as yet been forthcoming (there being many extenuating circumstances in setting up any publication - let alone a Lesbian magazine!), but we have received literally volumes of mail from this young enterprising journalist. We would like to share some of her thoughts with our readers - these after reading a file of LADDERS we sent her.

"You might be interested that a circle has opened in Stockholm about the same time that your magazine first appeared. It has many members - I guess nearly a hundred - and is called 'Stockholm clubben Diana'. As you do, they have lectures by doctors and psychologists (the one remarkable one is Frau Otterson-Jenssen, former assistant of Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld).

"But because of experience I can see that you have the best chances to succeed of all other organizations I have seen. Perhaps it has something to do with your casual and practical American thinking. We sometimes lean too much to the sentiments . . . Am I right?

"In pre-war Germany (and before Hitler) there were many interesting organizations here. Some of their members later on became 'rebels' in a political way. I do not know if it is known to you that homosexuals have been in concentration camps. Their backs were marked with a pink triangle. Because of this I was amazed when I saw the triangle - you use it as a sign. (The boys here, too.)

"I am most interested in your library and the book-list of Marion Zimmer Bradley. I know many of the mentioned books, and I have even seen in England pictures of Rad-

clyffe Hall and found varied stories about her life. I know as well the 'Chase of the Wild Goose' and I can name you another library containing it: The Public Library of Cardiff, Wales-U.K. They possess as well books of Radclyffe Hall signed by her own hand.

"'Madchen in Uniform' by Christa Winsloe (English title 'Children in Uniform') appeared as a play as well as a movie in Germany (1935) - and now it will be remade with Lili Palmer as the teacher!

"Simone de Beauvoir, the French existentialist writer (pupil and partner of Jean Paul Sartre) gives a modern viewpoint on our problem in her book on women, 'The Second Sex'. Everyone of us needs to read this!! S. d. B. is perhaps the most intelligent woman of not only this continent. Even her enemies say this - her intellect seems 'masculine'.

"Transvestism does not mean homosexuality. We agree. I know a male transvestite who has a couple of children. And something else: girls liking trousers, suits and sporty dresses are not transvestites. They just like comfortable dressing. And a sporty girl does not like to make up like a 'pin-up girl', of course. But a sporty girl is not always a Lesbian either! Nobody objects to this kind of dressing here - and the line of mode 1958 is nonchalant."

And here are some brief and to-the-point comments on particular articles and writers appearing in past issues of THE LADDER:

"You seem to want only 'happy-ends' in books, etc. Life is so and so."

"Dr. Baker - bravo! She is a courageous and wonderful person."

"The letter of the Negro - L.H.N., New York - I love it really. What a mind!"

"I do not agree with many things 'Yes, I Am' writer says. Everybody who knows the diffi-

culties of our partnerships will agree with me that the best ones are those in which both are devoted to each other and have the courage to live with the friend. Those friendships have more chance to last. I do not care whether she lives with her friend or not, but she must not think the example she gives of her life is so wonderful that it should be copied. Also when her secretary saw THE LADDER and made the remark about the 'stuff', in this moment she had the chance - not to admit but still to say something concerning the subject. She should have tried to raise the general understanding..."

"B.C., Kansas City, writes sympathetic letters."

"Fannie Hurst showed very much 'profile', I think. I liked her straight words in the end of the Showcase program concerning censorship."

"Why Sten Russell's poem is called 'The Faithful Soldier' - this I cannot find out. Is it the poem of a female soldier to her girl - or otherwise what has a soldier's poem to do in your LADDER? I do not understand what Sten Russell (whom I like otherwise very much) thought."

"I like your meetings and discussions! I should like to be there."

"Please, here is an answer to R.S. in Winnipeg: (I had prepared an article about Radclyffe Hall in 'Kontakt'). - Yes, I know the poetry by Raddyffe Hall you mention. Do you know her other prose too? 'Adam's Bread', for example, and 'The Unlit Lamp'. Those are printed by Falcon Press, London. Did you read about her in 'Living Authors', a book of biographies, Wilson Co., New York, 1937? There I found the poem she wrote when she was a little girl, 'No wonder the birdies

love you', and her photograph. She was a beautiful woman! Not quite as masculine as Stephen in 'The Well of Loneliness'. Perhaps you can try to find the books through Meyer Loshak & Son, Ltd., Dedham, Colchester, Essex, England. I have seen interesting lists; perhaps they can find it for you."

"'I love her' I liked very much."

"I like your Jo Allyn!"

"And the article defending the editor of THE LADDER - very good! And Miss Martin's poems - unfortunately I do not 'get all'. There are terms I understand only by imagination, not by reason. Poetry in another language - this is always difficult."

"But of all Lesbian writing during the last years I found the American in THE LADDER most straight, most clear and clean. This I say not to 'give you a sweet'."

Certainly Miss B has made friends of us all. The editor of THE LADDER would like to extend to her an invitation to become our first European correspondent. We think there is a great need for international cooperation and understanding.

LESBIAN QUESTIONNAIRE

Inserted in this month's LADDER is a sociological questionnaire sponsored by the Daughters of Bilitis, Inc.

This is the first step in a research program which will, we hope, enable us to publish information dealing with the common, garden variety Lesbian rather than the extreme examples which permeate most of the literature extant on the subject today.

We hope that you will fill out the questionnaire and send it in promptly. We hope, too, that you will tell your friends about it and send in for additional copies.

LIFE CLASS

Conclusion of a story by JAN ADDISON

SYNOPSIS: Vanessa, an art student living with her strict elder step sister, Mag, has become interested in Garda Parton, attractive model at the art institute Van attends.

After a bitter argument with Mag over wearing lipstick, Van arrives late for her class and has to sit way in the back. This turns out to be fortunate for Van since the model, Garda, is posing in the nude. The 'life' pose had been announced by the instructor, TenBrinck, before Van had arrived.

Completely unstrung by the sight of "the small perfect dark-olive body that was somehow gaunt without being bony..." Van finds it impossible to pick up a brush.

"...I have never seen anyone naked before...except myself...and only pieces of myself at one time, standing on a chair in the bathroom... What am I to do? Oh, what can I do?"

Van sits immobile during the 20-minute period. Finally TenBrinck announces a rest for the model and then begins a tour of the room. "Slowly but inevitably the quiet old Dutchman, dropping kind or sharp or humorous comments as he inspected canvases, reached her side and saw hers empty..."

For the first time this year he looked directly, sharply, at her face. "Come with me a moment," he said in an undertone, and led her the short distance to his studio-office. There he almost completely closed the door. "Now, is the body so shocking to you then? At once we must know if this scholarship is misplaced, wasted. It is intended for those who enter art seriously."

"Nobody could be more serious," Van brought out at last in a grating voice. "I would rather paint that body than

anything on earth. But...I was late, didn't hear your announcement, I was taken by surprise...and it came to me out there, I have seen no one naked before in my life. But I am not 'shocked' in the sense you think. Only... frozen."

"Good, good, excellent! You have the analytical mind. You have been raised over-strictly, is it not so? (Incidentally the correct term here is nude, not naked.) Do not worry, but go out and in the next periods do what you can, what you can. But first a little medicine, I think." He reached into a drawer and drew out a flat bottle and a small glass, which he filled and handed to her.

She swallowed and choked, authority and economy having provided small experience of alcohol. Chuckling gently, TenBrinck patted her on the back. "Run now to the fountain for your 'chaser,' and then return and paint," he said, and pushed her toward the corridor door.

She crossed to the fountain in a thrill of terror, having no idea what she had drunk except that it was frightfully strong and would certainly make her loopy. But when she reached her easel, she found the drink had only dissolved the paralyzing tension, leaving her with a wild happy confidence that she could do anything - anything.

Garda was already posed again and she snatched up her crayon. She had wasted one period of the four, there was no time for a lot of drawing. She slashed in a mere stick-figure armature, and saw immediately the imaginary swathe of dark hanging, right-center, needed to balance the figure's shadow on the left. By golly, she was drawing things that weren't there, one of TenBrinck's enthusiasms if the things were well-placed!

Now she seized tubes and began to figure flesh tones. But she quailed, remembering agonized half-hours spent on just face and arms, and TenBrinck saying with soft regret at the end: 'Ah, my dear young lady, so much struggle. One hits the bull's eye with a single arrow, not the whole quiver.' ...Oh damn all that! The only important thing now was getting this down on canvas - to <u>keep</u>. (If

only there were two weeks, instead of two more stingy 20-minute poses, to capture that adorable figure!) She half shut her eyes, making honestly at last the gesture she had scorned all year to copy and pretend. Finding out bare essentials required it...Her problem's solution came to her for the first time in terms of oil-tube labels, not descriptive words. She unscrewed a minimum of proper caps.

Through the second rest period she continued to paint from memory, as many others did often enough so that no one commented. It was just before the third 'rest' that TenBrinck materialized behind her shoulder so unnoticed that at his exclamation she jerked violently and dropped a brush.

"Good, good, good!" She had heard that tone seldom, and never addressed to her. "A little shock, a little medicine, and we learn what is in us, not so?" His hands swept the air like an orchestra leader's, following the lines on her canvas. "Do not spoil it now with pretty detail. This is a sketch - and one of power! - Not a portrait. The scholarship is well justified. As I knew, of course." He twinkled and went on, leaving her with ecstatically held breath.

During the last period she worked fiercely for the half of it, strengthening mass, line, shadow, in figure and background. Automatically then she picked up a smaller brush for detail. ...For the first time she saw detail - till then her eyes, as it were on their own, had kept some different, blurring focus. But now...it was Garda Parton sitting there without clothes. Shallow firm breasts, their short wide nipples cedar-rose and almost without auriole. Navel a flick of brownish shadow on the flat belly. Pubic hair a small violent black arrowhead burying its tip between the thighs...Van went hot, damp, weak...swallowed again and again...Her hand shook too much to set the needed touches on canvas. She laid down her brush and went out.

When she had drunk thirstily at the fountain and run ice water over her hands and wrists, she returned thin-lipped and swiftly, tightly finished her job. She wanted this

picture so frightfully that she acquired steadiness from heaven knew what emergency store. But her mouth, her fingertips, every part of her it seemed, felt swollen and aching.

The final two-hour bell whirred. While Garda was lifting the magenta wrap to her shoulders, the crew-cut blunt-nosed blond who had worked all but at her elbow put a foot on the platform's edge and said confidently, "How's about a beer with me, beautiful, and I'll drive you home."

From her detached model's face, not yet human, Garda said without tone, "Thanks, I'm doing something else," and walked off while she said it. A few good-natured jeers were levelled at the boy as the class noisily packed up and began to leave. Van dawdled, waiting for Garda to dress. Because tonight she was going to walk out with her, to the gate at least, no matter what it was the girl was doing after.

She was still cleaning brushes when the curtains opened and Garda walked out in jeans and a suede car coat. Van opened her mouth to call out but no voice came, and the other girl, smiling from only the slate-blue eyes, strode out into the corridor alone. Now Van made a disgraceful scrambled sweep of her easel-shelf and bundled the mess into her locker; shot her canvas into the drying rack with a prayer, and mopped her hands with a turpentined handkerchief as she ran. Even so the corridor was empty, and she began to sprint, praying to overtake Garda outside before a bus came. But the girl was not in sight on the terraces, not in the little huddle waiting under the street light. ...Someone must have called for her in a car.

Frustrated and frantic, Van started on the downhill walk along the ornate fence, so tired now that she felt literally sick. And so emptily famished, but not for food, that getting home to her drab room just couldn't be faced. If she bought some sort of liquor and drank herself blind? Then 'sick' tomorrow would be no lie to phone the office in the morning. But money...and such an endless walk to buy the drink...and facing Mag in the morning...Without

(Continued on page 18)

Me vs. INSURANCE

Helen Sanders, with her article (Me vs. Taxes) in the May issue of THE LADDER has apparently started off a series. Here is a second article concerning the "family status" of the homophile relationship as regards insurance. A third article in this series has been suggested concerning community property in a Lesbian marriage which will appear in a forthcoming issue. -ED.

Recently the two of us threw an insurance agent for a complete loss. We applied for a Home Owner's Policy. We own our house (or at least have a small interest in it, there being two mortgages on the property having prior claim). The house is held in joint tenancy, and we were naive enough to think that taking out such a policy should pose no particular problem therefore.

However, our proposal caused our insurance agent much consternation. There simply wasn't anything in the book to cover such a request! For the regular Home Owner's Policy is for the single family - and we, two individuals, it seems, constitute two separate families. Of course, we don't hardly feel that way about it, but it was tough explaining to the insurance agent.

So, because of our two-family status, instead of one comprehensive policy with the cheaper premium, we now have three separate policies: all physical loss on the house, personal liability, and fire and theft for our personal belongings.

But that's not all! We had to pay an extra premium to get both names on the personal liability policy - two families, you know. And the personal belongings - well, that really put the insurance office in an uproar. You see, all our furnishings are jointly owned. It simply isn't a case of that chair is yours, the table mine. Only our clothes are individually owned, and payment for those come out of a joint bank account. So you could say they were jointly owned too, if you wanted to be technical. And could be if

we were the same size, but unfortunately we are not.

The insurance agent's solution to the personal belongings policy? Insure our belongings under one name, we are informed. Now this could very well lead to even further complications, it would seem to me. It is not inconceivable that something could happen to the one name as well as the possessions. Then what? A will perhaps? Power of attorney? Or total loss?

We had also heard much ado about the new mortgage insurance policies. We investigated that proposition too. Again we were not eligible, since we were not a legal family. The best that could be done in this instance would be to insure each party's half of the mortgage - at higher rates, of course!

Oh, yes! There is equal difficulty in insuring a jointly owned automobile. Here again it isn't easy to get that second name on that policy!

So you see that obtaining adequate insurance in the case of a Lesbian partnership can be a very serious matter indeed! Whether or not the "family" relationship is recognized, it would seem to me that there should be little or no problem involved when ownership is jointly shared - especially when both names appear on the pink slip or the deed or the sales contract. But apparently this is a very new problem to the insurance people and to date consideration has not been given joint owners who are "unrelated." What's the matter? Aren't any of you others carrying insurance?

- Del Martin

'CAPTIVE' MAY BE RELEASED

Mike Connolly, writing in "The Hollywood Reporter", states that "Herbert Berghof and Ben Boyer are dickering with Dana Wynter about doing a revival of "The Captive," that naughty play of the 20s. The police packed the original Helen Menken starrer into the pokey because of its Lesbian theme."

SONNET FROM A VERSE

That you are gone is neither grief nor pain
But like the even dropping of the rain,
Where the sun for an interlude has shown,
Where the seed for a space in time has grown;
That you speak no more is not like a grave
To weep upon but a receding wave
In the vessel's wake, broken on the shore,
When the rise and the falling are no more.
In the ghost of your step upon the stair,
It is to find no slightest shadow there.
That you are gone is like the nameless void,
The silence, when a city is destroyed,
For in this there is neither grief nor pain:
It is the wide waste that has come again.

- Jaime Stewart

LOVE'S CARAVAN

Over the sands of passion
Bourne by vehement desire,
Over the dunes of longing
Flaming like molten fire;

Past a mirage of beauty
Scintillating with rainbow gleams,
On through my yearning's desert,
Trails my caravan of dreams.

Sandstorms of opposition
Spend their wrath throughout the night,
As onward plodding camels
Trudge until the dawning's light.

Burned by simoons of desert,
Blown from blazing hells afar,
Cooled by the breath of evening,
Guided by a distant star;

Into a dream oasis
Where the weary camels rest,
Dreams of my hopes that were slaughtered,
Ever twist within my breast.

On through a night of shadows,
Into gold of virgin dawn,
Bearing a faith eternal,
Caravan of love moves on.

- Carol Hales

MILADY'S HANDS

Your hands are woman's hands, and yet
They are not soft, effeminate.
They have a strength, a suppleness
That woman's hands do not possess.
Your skillful fingers, equally
At ease in crafts and carpentry
Are yet no strangers to the part
They must play in domestic art.
Most women's hands are butterflies,
In yours a strength of purpose lies.
Your hands are calm and self-assured,
Your nails are short, unmanicured.
And rough and calloused though they be
They yet retain much charm for me.
I love your hands. Twin traitors, they!
When I am with you they betray
Your secret self. Your fingers turn
To clasp each other, though they yearn
To touch my hair, my eyes, my lips,
Those eager, questing fingertips,
To seek my beating heart and dare
to hold it, as if captive, there.
Oh, prudent lass, unclasp your hands,
For I am one who understands!

- from VICE VERSA
Vol. 1, No. 4, Sept., 1947

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Thursday, July 5 - Moderated forum discussion sponsored by the Mattachine Society, Inc., 1830 Sutter St., 8 p.m.

Friday, June 6 - Gab 'n Java session at 3927 Army St., 8 p.m. This gathering will be a slight departure from our usual discussion-type evening in that we will have as a guest a young man from Hawaii. He has a large fund of information on the legends, stories and folk lore of the Islands as well as knowledge of the homosexual life over there. It should prove to be a very interesting evening. Women only.

Wednesday, June 11 - Monthly business meeting at 2174 California St., 8 p.m.

Saturday, June 21 - Spaghetti feed. All you can eat for $1.50. Open to all. Please phone reservations to YUkon 2-9290 by Thursday, June 19. Time will be 7 p.m. to ? at 2266 48th Avenue, San Francisco.

Saturday, June 28 - LADDER work party. A couple of hours of your time and energy will pay large dividends in good fellowship and new acquaintances. At 12 noon at the DOB office.

Friday, July 11 - Gab 'n Java session at 2217 Fillmore St., 8 p.m. An excellent chance to discuss problems in an informal atmosphere. Women only.

Office hours now being maintained by the Daughters of Bilitis at 165 O'Farrell St., Rm. 405: Tuesday through Thursday evenings from 7 to 9 p.m.; Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

62. THE 21" SCREEN by Edwin Fadiman, Jr. Doubleday, 1958.

A public figure, a star TV M.C., and a very worthless man is Rex Lundy. He damages, or ruins, his wife, his mistress, his daughter and his friends. Sixteen-year-old Barbara Lundy, after being ignored for years, turns to lovely 23-year-old Chris, a Lesbian, for love. Chris loves her but keeps the relationship unconsumated because of Barbara's age. When Rex Lundy belatedly tries to make up for his errors he separates them. However the author makes clear that another person will come along to take Chris' place in Barbara's life. He is not so optimistic about poor Chris. One of the more noble portraits, and surprising from a male author.

63. THE LOOKING GLASS HEART by Myron Brinig. Sagamore Press, 1958.

One chapter of this family novel laid in New York City in 1910-1930 concerns the variant affair of one daughter. Jean Greenshields for many years has a satisfactory and half innocent relationship with her secretary-companion. This is destroyed by the secretary's sudden marriage. The reactions of Jean and the final conversation between the two women make the nature of Jean's emotion very clear.

64. TWISTED CLAY by Frank Walford. Claude Kendall, New York, 1934.

A sordid story of mental disintegration.

65. GIRLS OF THE FRENCH QUARTER by John B. Thompson. Beacon Books, 1954.

A sensational expose story with one chapter devoted to overt Lesbian action between a society girl and a street wanton. Not very good.

(Continued from page 11)

warning she began to sob, dry silent hurting convulsions that came from the very depths. She stumbled across the boulevard - with the light mercifully green, knowing half way over she hadn't looked to see...

On the far corner a low slightly roughened voice said, "Hello. Didn't know you came this way."

Garda! Van gasped and began to shake. Garda, a thin boy in jeans a leather coat, with a lighted cigarette dangling between her fingers. But how? She must have spoken aloud, for the answer came: "There's a back way out of there I always take if the wolves are really howling. You catching this bus too?"

"No, I live on down a quarter mile, one of those little old houses under the hill."

"Mind if I come home with you for awhile? That crew-cut character knows where I live, and I don't like to be reachable for awhile after classes. Not alone, that is. My roommate moved out this week, got a new job to hell and gone across town."

No husband now, then!

Van tasted blood from her bitten lip before she said, low and bitterly, "I wouldn't ask my worst enemy home with me. My half-sister, she's 40, won't stand for lipstick or pants or smoking or drinks - even beer- or radio jazz. Or guests, unless they're her own choice. She wouldn't stand for art classes, either, if she could keep her claws in me around the clock."

"My god! Why do you stand for her? I'd move out so fast—"

"I suppose it's partly because she kept me after my mother died till I could get a job, and now she needs my board money unless she takes roomers again. ...But I guess, to be honest, it's mostly because I'd hate so to live in a

room alone and eat at a drugstore counter."

"Sister, don't I know!"

The broad-browed, dim-eyed face of a bus was bearing down on them.

"Look," Garda Parton said urgently, "Why don't you come home with me? You can phone your dragon. Stay all night- I'm in an apartment now, no drugstore counters."

"I can't go to work tomorrow in these clothes - "

"Oh, look!" Garda Parton's hand gripped hers, and it too was burning. "We can both just be 'sick' tomorrow! We've got things to work out..."

The bus wheezed to a stop and its door doubled open. Garda swung up, her fingers twined in Van's. One split second of pause, and Van swung up too.

"We'll work those things out all right," she laughed from deep inside as she dropped her coins in the glass meter.

one incorporated

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232 S. Hill St.
Los Angeles 12,
California

ONE MAGAZINE—deals primarily with homosexuality from the scientific, historical and critical point of view. It contains articles, short stories, poetry, news items, book reviews and letters from readers. A popular magazine has called it 'The Voice of U. S. homosexuals.' Subscriptions $5 per year in U. S., Canada and Mexico, $6 elsewhere; all copies mailed first class sealed. Single issues 50 cents each, postpaid.

ONE INSTITUTE—planned adult education facility, offering college level courses in socio-sexual studies. Write for information.

ONE BOOK SERVICE—handles distribution of all books published by One, Inc., as well as other current and recent titles on homosexual and related themes. Write for latest listings.

'...a mystic bond of brotherhood makes all men one.'
—CARLYLE

Sex Law Clarified

A sex offender who has qualified for probation and has been released from "all penalties and disabilities" as provided by the Penal Code, cannot be tried for a public offense if he fails to register a change of address.

This partial clarification of Section 290 of the State of California Penal Code, which requires certain sex offenders to register with a law enforcement agency each time the offender changes residence, was made by the State District Court of Appeal recently.

The case was handled by Kenneth C. Zwerin, San Francisco attorney, without fee because of Mr. Zwerin's strong feelings as to the constitutionality of the section "because it made an artitrary distinction between sex offenders and other convicted criminals." The attorney added that at most "this section is but a law enforcement technique designed for the convenience of law enforcement agencies, through which a list of names and addresses of certain offenders then residing in a given community is compiled...."

The court's opinion was that the requirement of registration ended with the successful termination of the probation. The court refused to pass on the constitutionality of the section, holding that it was not necessary for its present decision.

The court pointed out, however, that the "release obviously operates prospectively, not retroactively. It does not necessarily revoke or expunge the record of first registration or re-registrations that took place during the probationary period."

"A great deal of credit should be given the San Francisco Adult Probation Officer who encouraged me to file the petition," Mr. Zwerin stated, "and to the individual who permitted his name to be used in the petition and was not abashed to have posterity ascertain that he had suffered a felony conviction for a sexual offense."

READERS RESPOND

"Issues of THE LADDER are improving with each rung and make me glad that I renewed my subscription.

"I was very flattered to see reprints of some of my 'Vice-Versa' material included in the March and April issues. I realize that a thorough proofreading of THE LADDER must be well-nigh impossible when your DOB activities are so many and so diverse. However, I wish there were some way I could explain to readers that I'm really not so insensitive to rhyme and meter as the altered version of my poem, 'The Elder' would indicate. The line 'Abuse and Prejudice have placed them there' was omitted in the third verse.

"I also hope they don't give me the credit for misspelling the word 'aging' on my 'No Exit' review (page 11 of THE LADDER, last line in paragraph 3)."

E.E., Sherman Oaks, Calif.

Sorry. In the hustle of getting to press these things do happen. We try, though. -ED.

* * * * *

"I cannot at all understand J.S.'s aversion to the term 'Lesbian' and believe THE LADDER would suffer immeasurably from loss of individuality were our 'Lesbiana' discarded in favor of a more 'acceptable' synonym. Perhaps I shouldn't say I can't understand the aversion since I experience a similar though apparently less intense feeling in regard to 'Butch' and 'Femme'. However, do not believe we should advocate revamping or conventionalizing our vocabulary simply because certain words may 'rub us the wrong way'. Why not instead ask ourselves why we experience such reactions and then go to work to overcome them. We will probably find that the 'unpleasant' connotations arise from our own acceptance of faulty generalizations, or else are due to bitterness in connection with past experiences for which we have not as

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The case was handled by Kenneth C. Zwerin, San Francisco attorney, without fee because of Mr. Zwerin's strong feelings as to the constitutionality of the section "because it made an artitrary distinction between sex offenders and other convicted criminals." The attorney added that at most "this section is but a law enforcement technique designed for the convenience of law enforcement agencies, through which a list of names and addresses of certain offenders then residing in a given community is compiled...."

The court's opinion was that the requirement of registration ended with the successful termination of the probation. The court refused to pass on the constitutionality of the section, holding that it was not necessary for its present decision.

The court pointed out, however, that the "release obviously operates prospectively, not retroactively. It does not necessarily revoke or expunge the record of first registration or re-registrations that took place during the probationary period."

"A great deal of credit should be given the San Francisco Adult Probation Officer who encouraged me to file the petition," Mr. Zwerin stated, "and to the individual who permitted his name to be used in the petition and was not abashed to have posterity ascertain that he had suffered a felony conviction for a sexual offense."

READERS RESPOND

"Issues of THE LADDER are improving with each rung and make me glad that I renewed my subscription.

"I was very flattered to see reprints of some of my 'Vice-Versa' material included in the March and April issues. I realize that a thorough proofreading of THE LADDER must be well-nigh impossible when your DOB activities are so many and so diverse. However, I wish there were some way I could explain to readers that I'm really not so insensitive to rhyme and meter as the altered version of my poem, 'The Elder' would indicate. The line 'Abuse and Prejudice have placed them there' was omitted in the third verse.

"I also hope they don't give me the credit for misspelling the word 'aging' on my 'No Exit' review (page 11 of THE LADDER, last line in paragraph 3)."

E.E., Sherman Oaks, Calif.

Sorry. In the hustle of getting to press these things do happen. We try, though. -ED.

* * * * *

"I cannot at all understand J.S.'s aversion to the term 'Lesbian' and believe THE LADDER would suffer immeasurably from loss of individuality were our 'Lesbiana' discarded in favor of a more 'acceptable' synonym. Perhaps I shouldn't say I can't understand the aversion since I experience a similar though apparently less intense feeling in regard to 'Butch' and 'Femme'. However, do not believe we should advocate revamping or conventionalizing our vocabulary simply because certain words may 'rub us the wrong way'. Why not instead ask ourselves why we experience such reactions and then go to work to overcome them. We will probably find that the 'unpleasant' connotations arise from our own acceptance of faulty generalizations, or else are due to bitterness in connection with past experiences for which we have not as

yet forgiven ourselves. If we are willing to be objective, we will have to admit that every word as 'created' is worthwhile and remains so until or unless it is made otherwise.

"Let us at all cost keep 'Lesbiana' and Lesbian with a capital 'L'."

J.H., Huntington, W. Va.

* * * * *

"Want you to know that we enjoy each and every LADDER, from first to last. It is fine to see such progress.

"We both loved 'Open Letter to Ann Aldrich'. I was hurt that Miss Aldrich didn't see fit to include a couple in her book with whom we could compare ourselves. We certainly aren't 'high-class', and don't have money, but neither are we characters. We are considered to be 'normal' at work. We do associate with a group of girls, go to 'gay bars' occasionally, as well as house parties. Rarely is this 'hands-around' deal seen. We are all really interested in living happy but uncomplicated lives as far as we are able.

"My friend and I have lived together for less than five years, but as far as we are concerned it's for life. We own our furniture and car jointly, and just signed a mortgage for a home of our own. Well, it will be our own in 15 years! I wish Miss Aldrich would write about someone like us. Sure, it was a little rough getting adjusted - to this life as well as each other - but I think we've just about made it, and it looks like clear sailing from here on.

"Both of us like the term 'Lesbiana' and hope you don't change it."

M.L., W. Warwick, R. I.

* * * * *

"I thoroughly enjoy reading each issue of THE LADDER. I

would like to know where I might obtain some of the books you list from time to time under the feature 'Lesbiana'. I cannot secure any of them in the public library of this city, nor can I even get them from the state library at Indianapolis. I would like to either buy some of these books or borrow some of them to read.

"I especially liked the article 'Yes, I Am' featured in the March issue of THE LADDER. It would be interesting to hear more about the, no doubt, thousands of women friends who are enjoying & satisfying and beautiful friendship, such as these two friends are enjoying."

E.W., New Castle, Ind.

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***Mattachine* REVIEW**

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York, issues a list of recent and older books on the homosexual theme. Pan-Graphic Press, 693 Mission St., San Francisco, maintains a book service as does ONE, Inc., 232 South Hill St., Los Angeles. "Gay Bar" may be obtained from the DOB as shown in the ad in this issues. -ED.

* * * * *

"FIRST: Permit me to congratulate you upon your splendid 'open letter' to Ann Aldrich (smack her hide!). I shall be much interested in her reply. How can we censure the otherwise-uninformed public for entertaining prejudice when their only acquaintance with the Lesbian is that learned through such writers as Ann Aldrich? Reading these misrepresentations leaves me depressed for days.

"But my chief objection is not the pained reaction which mature people like us experience: it is the unmeasured harm it does to a young adolescent, one just awakening to variance. Should her introduction to this condition be one of these stories, then what can result other then a 'guilt complex'? Consider how complicated, even impossible, an adjustment is likely to become when she tries to compare the sordid mess of these stories with what her inner self tells her is natural, beautiful and fulfilling. The same applies to the male variant.

"There is some truth to the statement of some heteros that the homo life is undesirable. But ONLY because the hetero has made it that way - thanks in part to people like Ann Aldrich!

"And by the way, your open letter suggests that she might belong to the minority group of which she writes so disparagingly. This amazed me: for some reason, I had always been naive enough to suppose that the homophile harbored no such traitors as this one! A repressed homo, yes; I can readily conceive that a variant refusing to accept himself as such might write defensively - but how could a person bring shame upon his own admitted condition?

"SECOND: Added congratulation for your new-type cover! I like this treatment, for a change, very much. Though the hand drawings are effective also.

"THIRD: I am sorry that a reader felt it necessary to label the March fiction as 'tres bad'. If it is literature she wants, she can find readily available such writers as Shakespeare and Milton or such modern authors as D.H. Lawrence and Frank O'Connor...I think that most readers of THE LADDER are not in search of the 'strong unhappy ending', but rather, a story that leaves us with a feeling of bright hopefulness. As far as getting a pleasant 'lift' was concerned, I'd recommend 'What's In a Name?' as tres good! Who wrote it?

"FOURTH: Concerning 'Lesbiana', let's consider a few things - recalling its classical origin - Sappho and the Isle of Lesbos - the name 'Lesbian' should stand out as a badge of pride. Recalling further, that any tarnish the word has acquired comes only from those persons un-

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acquainted with the entire picture, I consider it almost a duty to stay with the word. After all, it is the use of the term by such a high-type vehicle as THE LADDER which will rub off the tarnish, permitting it to establish its true meaning. Then, too, aren't we rather 'weak' to abandon such an apt term merely because certain prejudiced persons abuse the word? So, please, let's keep 'Lesbiana'....."

"FIFTH: Good luck with your survey! One segment of information which I hope both your questionnaire, and mine, slanted to both the male and female homophile, will uncover is to what extent a person's ultimate adjustment is influenced by the manner in which he has been introduced to homosexuality. More clearly stated, is the adjustment of a variant postponed or prohibited by his learning of the condition through media such as Ann Aldrich inflicts upon us? Or conversely, does he reach an early and satisfactory acceptance when his introduction to the subject is sympathetic and unprejudiced? (Not of course, that true 'adjustment' is to be found anywhere....and more's the pity!)"

F.L., Peace Dale, R. I.

"P.S. Am still hoping to help establish a DOB chapter here in the New England area."

The author of "What's In a Name?" is not known, as all stories appearing in VICE VERSA were unsigned. And the editor, whom we suspect is the author, prefers to remain anonymous. We are deeply indebted to her for giving us permission to reprint selections from her magazine.

Your suggestions concerning the survey have been noted by our research committee. Any other suggestions from readers as to what particular type of data we should strive for in future questionnaires will be welcome.

As for the possibilities of a New England chapter, we are now in process of writing to various subscribers in your area whom we think might be interested, asking them to get in touch with you. Others who would like to join the group please write to the DOB and we will put you in touch with F.L. - ED.

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